(c) the steps taken by Government to tone up the functioning of the customs at various airports to prevent such discrepancies of the private cargo airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Customs authorities in Delhi including Directorate of Revenue Intelligence have conducted investigations againt M/s. Sam Aviation Pvt. Ltd. in connection with four separate cases.

In first of these cases involving claim of drawback by a Delhi based firm in 1995, role of M/s. Sam Aviation Pvt. Ltd. was not established.

In the second case, miscellaneous unmanifested goods valued at Rs. 55.57 lakhs, being attempted to be smuggled out by a flight operated by M/s. East Line Aviation Ltd., of whom M/ s. Sam Aviation Ltd. were one of the agents, were seized on 9.2.1997. Subsequently, the goods were ordered to be confiscated and penalties were also imposed on the said two companies as well as some of their employees. Appeals against the order for confiscation and imposition of penalties are presently pending in the High Court of Delhi.

In other two cases involving claims of drawback to the tune of Rs. 1.03 crores (approx.) and Rs. 3.05 crores (approx.), the role of M/s. Sam Aviation Pvt. Ltd. is under investigation.

(c) All field formations under the Customs Department including Directorate of Revenue Intelligence are alert and vigilant to prevent such discrepancies by the private cargo airlines at various airports of the country.

New Insurance Policies in Gujarat

5047. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the General Insurance Companies have stopped giving new policies in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the insurance companies have received claims worth crores of rupees for the damage caused to industry during the recent riots;

(d) if so, the total amount of claims received by the companies; and

(e) whether it is because of this that Insurance companies have stopped issuing fresh policies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The General Insures' (Public Sector) Association of India (GIPSA) have reported that while existing insurance policies are renewed as per the normal practice, fresh policies are issued after inspection of the risk as per the underwriting requirement.

(c) and (d) The GIPSA have reported that as on 3.5.2002, the Public Sector General Insurance Companies have received about 5284 claims amounting to about Rs. 183 crores.

(e) No, Sir.

Spending on Social Security Benefits

5048. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per UNHDR-2001 India has abysmal performance in education, sanitation and public health;

(b) whether it is a fact that 44.2 per cent of Indians live below $ 1 a day and social security benefits expenditure is just 0.3 per cent of the Indian GDP;

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to accelerate spending on social security benefits in the country rather than defence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) While the HDR for 2001 does indicate that the percentage of population earning less than US $ 1 a day in terms of 1993 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) in India is 44.2%, the HDR for 1996 indicates that social security benefits expenditure as a ratio of GDP was 0.3% in India (Base year 1993). However, the Planning Commission adopts as different methodology and does not compute poverty ratios on the basis of poverty lines converted into US $ PPP prices.

(d) In recognition of the enhanced role of the Government in Human Resource Development, the Central Government has increased resource allocation for individual components of the Social Sector.